

Besting the best

IN THE SPACE of two months Jan Timman has succeeded in winning major events ahead of both participants in the coming world championship match. Following his victory in Amsterdam ahead of Anatoly Karpov, the Dutch Grandmaster went on to storm a double-round event in Las Palmas in which Viktor Korchnoi was pushed into third equal position. Final scores were: Timman 8½ points; Larsen (Denmark) 6½; Seirawan (USA) and Korchnoi (ex USSR, now Switzerland) 6; Bellon and Padron Garcia (both Spain) 1½.

An astonishing feature was the three losses of Korchnoi, to Larsen, Seirawan and Timman — a total which increased by two (to de Firmian of the USA and a virtually unknown West German called Bastian) after the challenger's most recent mediocre performance at Baden Baden. Both world championship players have thus been less convincing in their latest appearances. It remains to be seen what effect the postponement of their match, originally scheduled for early September, will have. The various delays have been caused by Fide president Fridrik Olafsson's siding with Korchnoi in demanding the release of the Soviet defector's wife and son "so that both players can start the match on equal terms".

Timman, meanwhile, is confirming his status as a formidable force to be reckoned with in the next championship cycle. He has already been awarded an automatic pass through to the interzonal stage by the recent Fide congress in Atlanta. The following magnificent fight against Korchnoi from Las Palmas illustrates both Timman's tremendous will to win and the depth of his play.

BOGO-INDIAN DEFENCE

J. TIMMAN	V. KORCHNOI
1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	e6
3. Nf3	Bb4 ch

Here 3...b6 is a straight Queen's Indian defence. The check with the bishop is considered more passive, but solid.

4. Bd2	a5
5. g3	b6
6. Bg2	Bb7
7. 0-0	0-0
8. Bf4	Be7
9. Nc3	Ne4
10. Qc2	Nxc3
11. Qxc3	d6
12. Qd3	f5

An improvement is 12...Nc6!, as played in a later game Chandler-Short, British championship 1981, giving at least equality.

13. Qe3	Qd7
14. Bg5	Re8
15. Rad1	Bf8
16. Qc3	Be4
17. d5	exd5

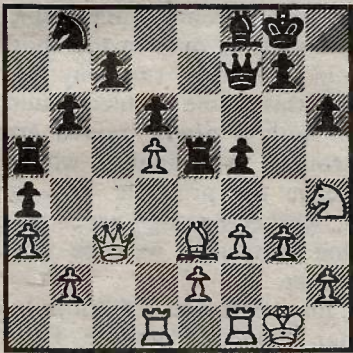
It seems more natural to play 17...e5, but then follows 18.Bh3 with the idea of trapping the bishop by Nh4 and f3.

18. cxd5	Qf7
19. Be3	h6

20. a3	a4
21. Nh4	Ra5
22. Bxe4	Rxe4
23. f3	Re5?

Better is 23...Re8 with an unclear position. The move played allows Timman to embark on a deep combination to wrest a positional advantage.

KORCHNOI



TIMMAN

24. Bd4!	Rxe2
25. Qd3	Re8
26. Bc3!	Ra8
27. Nxf5	

Timman has succeeded in gaining his positional edge, but it takes an extremely determined kingside attack to increase the pressure.

27. ...	Nd7
28. g4	g6
29. Nh4	Kh7
30. f4	Nc5
31. Qf3	Re4
32. f5	g5
33. Ng2	Rae8
34. Rfe1	Kg8
35. h4	Bg7
36. f6	gxh4
37. Rf1	

Threatening 38.fxg7.

37. ...	Bf8
38. Nxf4	Re3
39. Qg2	Ne4
40. Nf5!	Nxc3
41. Nxe3	Nxd1
42. Nxd1	Re5
43. Nc3	Qg6
44. f7 ch	Kh7
45. Ne2!	

A decisive manoeuvre.

45. ...	h5
46. Nf4!	Qxg4
47. Qxg4	hxg4
48. Ne6	Be7
49. f8=Q	Bxf8
50. Rf7 ch	

This final finesse prevents Black from taking the d-pawn — 50...Kh6 51.Rxf8 Rxd5 52.Rh8 ch Kg6 53.Nf4 ch and 54.Nxd5.

50. ...	Kg6
51. Rxf8	Re1 ch
52. Kg2	Rc1
53. Rf2	c6
54. dxc6	Rxc6

Having only two pawns for the knight, Korchnoi can hope to draw only by eliminating White's remaining pawns.

55. Kg3	Rc4
56. Rf4	Rxf4
57. Nxf4 ch	Kf5
58. Nd5	b5
59. Nc3	d5
60. Nxb5	Resigns

MURRAY CHANDLER